

DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM

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SECRET

HCG636

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ACTION EA-18

INFO OCT-01 SS-20 NSC-10 NSCE-00 INR-07 H-01 CIAE-00 PM-03
DODE-00 L-02 RSC-01 RSR-01 /064 W

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R 040511Z MAY 71
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2629
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
USDEL FRANCE

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 3069

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJECT: STAFFDEL LOWENSTEIN/MOOSE CONVERSATION
WITH SOUVANNA PHOUMA

1. FRIDAY APRIL 30 STAFFDEL LOWENSTEIN/MOOSE CALLED WITH ME ON PRIME MINISTER. CONVERSATION LASTED FORTY-FIVE MINUTES. PRIME MINISTER WAS RELAXED AND REHEARSED USUAL LINE ON MOST SUBJECTS. STAFFDEL REVIEWED BRIEFLY THEIR TALK WITH SOTH (VIENTIANE 3016).

2. ONE POINT I FOUND TO BE OF SIGNIFICANCE WAS HIS CRITICISM OF PRESIDENT THIEU WHOM HE SAID DID NOT ACCEPT THE NECESSITY OF GIVING THE VIET CONG A VOICE IN A SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT. PRIME MINISTER COMPARED THIEU'S POSITION WITH THAT OF THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE PRIME MINISTER, WOULD WELCOME PATHET LAO BACK INTO THE GOVERNMENTAL APPARATUS. PRIME MINISTER COMMENTED WITH REGARD TO BOTH VIET CONG AND PATHET LAO "AFTER ALL THEY CANNOT ALL BE KILLED."

3. PRIME MINISTER AFTER CRITICIZING THIEU THEN INDICATED

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State Dept. review completed

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THAT HE BELIEVED VICE PRESIDENT KY UNDERSTOOD THIS POINT BETTER THAN DID THE PRESIDENT. HE SAID HE COULD NOT HELP BUT BE IMPRESSED WITH KY'S RECENT STATEMENTS RE ROLE THAT VIET CONG SHOULD PLAY IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

4. PRIMIN AAS ASKED ABOUT US WITHDRAWAL. PRIMIN POINTED OUT THAT AMERICANS AS PRACTICAL PEOPLE OBVIOUSLY WOULD WITHDRAW THEIR FORCES FROM INDO CHINA AND THAT MADE SENSE TO HIM. IN ELABORATING ON THIS VIEW, HOWEVER, HE CLEARLY INDICATED THAT HE WAS THINKING OF POST-HOSTILITIES PERIOD AND WHEN DISCUSSING LAOS SAID THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT U.S. ASSISTANCE CONTINUE AT ITS PRESENT RATE UNTIL NORTH VIETNAMESE INVADERS RETURNED TO THEIR HOMELAND.

5. PRIMIN ALSO ADDRESSED HIMSELF TO U.S. GROUND FORCES AND HE THEN ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED IT ESSENTIAL THAT A SIZABLE U.S. AIR FORCE PRESENCE BE MAINTAINED IN THAILAND.

6. PRIME MINISTER CONFIRMED LOCAL RUMORS THAT HE INTENDS AFTER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY RECONVENES MAY 11 TO APPOINT KHAMPHAN PANYA MINISTER FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND KHAMMING SOUVANLASI MINISTER FOR PLANS VICE INPENG. PRIME MINISTER POINTED OUT THAT BOTH OF THESE SEATS WERE NEUTRAL AND THAT HE FELT THE APPOINTMENTS HE HAD IN MIND WOULD NOT DO VIOLENCE TO HIS POSITION OF MAINTAINING MINISTERIAL POSITIONS OPEN FOR PATHET LAO. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE, HOWEVER, HE DID NOT MENTION ELEVATING SISOUK TO MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND I GATHER FROM SISOUK THAT SUCH A POSSIBILITY IS CURRENTLY BEING HELD IN ABEYANCE.

7. THROUGHOUT THE PRIME MINISTER'S PRESENTATION HE REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GENEVA 1962 AGREEMENTS WHICH HE SAID WERE THE ONLY POSSIBILITY FOR REALISTIC SETTLEMENT OF THE LAO SITUATION AND WHICH CONSTITUTES THE ONLY "UMBRELLA" THAT MIGHT AFFORD LAOS SOME SECURITY. HIS CONCEPT OF THE 1962 AGREEMENTS OF COURSE WOULD INVOLVE THEIR GUARANTEE BY THE "GREAT" POWERS.

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8. ON THEIR DEPARTURE STAFFDEL NOTED PING PONG
TABLE ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S VERANDA AND INQUIRED
WHETHER HE WAS ACTIVELY DEVELOPING HIS APTITUDE
IN THIS LATEST FORM OF DIPLOMACY. PRIMIN LAUGHED.

GP-3.

GODLEY

SECRET